

prevent postwar depression caused by mass unemployment, an agency within the Administration, called the National Resource Planning Board, recommended a set of programs to provide education, training and employment for returning soldiers. One of these recommendations became the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, which was supported by the American Legion and other veteran organizations, and was unanimously passed both chambers of Congress. President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed it into law on June 22, 1944.

This bill became known as GI bill, and it provided a range of benefits to help veterans reintegrate into the workforce and American society. It provided education and training; loan guaranty for a home, farm, or business; unemployment pay for up to a year; job-search assistance; building materials for veterans hospitals; and military review of dishonorable discharges.

Veterans were entitled to one year of full-time education or training, plus a period equal to their time in service, up to four years. This program had a tremendous impact on college enrollment in this country. In fact, in 1947, which was the peak year of the program, veterans accounted for 49 percent of college enrollment.

Out of a veteran population of 15.4 million, just over half—7.8 million—were trained, including 2.23 million in college, 3.48 million in other schools, 1.4 million in on-job training, and 690,000 in farm training.

Millions of veterans, who would have flooded the labor market, instead opted for education, which reduced joblessness during the demobilization period. When they did enter the labor market, most were better prepared to contribute to the support of their families and society.

The GI bill created an initiative called the Local Veterans Employment Representative Program, or LVER. This program hired wartime veterans to work in employment centers across the U.S. to help other veterans secure counseling and employment. For 60 years, the LVER Program has helped veterans find jobs, training, and education. It has become an integral part of employment services and has been instrumental in helping veterans to resume normal lives after returning.

Today, LVER staff in my home State include some of the best-trained worker placement and retraining experts in the country. For Washington, which has one of the largest concentrations of servicemen and women, veterans, and their families, this is very important. Within my state, Pierce County has a particularly high active military and veteran population, and the LVER program there is a terrific example of what is possible.

The Pierce County LVER program ensures that over 25,000 veterans receive the vital re-employment support they deserve. With staff assistance, they write resumes that reflect the

breadth of their experience and skills, draft cover letters, and research employment opportunities. Veterans are also provided with leads on specific jobs and employers who seek the unique skills and talents of experienced veterans.

Staff of the Pierce County LVER also set up three major job fairs each year, which attract over more than 6,000 veterans and employers each year. The LVER office coordinates its activities with over 500 local, State, and national employers, giving veterans access to a unique national support network. The LVER staff includes men and women like Sam Mack, Sal Cantu, Tanya Brewster, and Vicki Bishop, all of whom are decorated veterans who are proud to support their fellow servicemen and women.

Sal Cantu, a resident of Pierce County, epitomizes the dedication and commitment of his colleagues. Sal coordinated a national effort to not only celebrate the GI bill, but specifically to recognize the LVER program and its tremendous impact on service members who seek meaningful employment once they return home. More than 25 State governors wrote letters lauding the efforts of the Pierce County LVER staff to recognize the significant impact of their program.

Most importantly, Sal, a 40 percent-disabled Vietnam era veteran, knows how to build trusting and lasting relationships with veterans. For him, helping veterans chart the next stage of their careers is a labor of love. I am extremely proud of the many men and women like Sal who, after serving honorably in the military, have made it their second career to support and help locate jobs for their fellow veterans.

Yet before the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, the United States did not provide employment or vocational services for veterans upon their completion of military service. Since the first GI bill, there have been five subsequent programs enacted to provide benefits to veterans of other military conflicts—from the Korean conflict to the war in Iraq. The most recent bill, the Montgomery GI bill enacted in 1985, is the largest contemporary program providing education benefits to military personnel. All enlisted soldiers and veterans are eligible for between \$7,500 and \$35,000 in educational aid. This program has attracted men and women into the armed forces by helping to pay for college. Today, over 90 percent of those who enter the military enroll in the Montgomery GI bill program.

As we reflect on the history and success of the GI bill, we should consider how this program can translate to all Americans. The spirit of the GI bill that in exchange for contributing to society, this country should help individuals invest in themselves also holds true for those who have not served in the military. As the cost of education rises, many low- and middle-income students—whether they have served in

the military or not need help covering educational expenses. We need to make the same kind of investment in the human capital, not just of our veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, but for all Americans. We need a GI bill for all Americans.

In the ever-changing global economy, the success of our companies depends on adaptability and innovation. As a result, we must change the way we educate and prepare workers to compete in the global economy. When national leaders were confronted with fundamental changes in the size and nature of the country's workforce following World War II, they stepped up to address the challenge with the GI bill. The economic sea changes we face today demand a similar response.

To maintain our economic competitiveness, we must keep up with the demand for skilled workers across all sectors of the economy. The changing economy has increased the demand for a college degree. In February, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that 6 of the 10 fastest-growing occupations in the U.S. economy require an associate's degree or bachelor's degree, and that all ten of these careers will require some type of skills training. By 2010, 40 percent of all job growth will require some form of post-secondary education.

To keep pace in the new, knowledge- and information-based economy, it's imperative that we equip our workforce with the skills to succeed in high-wage jobs. If we fail, those who lack skills will fall further and further behind, imperiling not just their individual futures, but America's ability to compete in the global economy.

It is the responsibility of this body to return to the level of investment in higher education that this country made 60 years ago. We do need a new GI bill for all Americans, and I, for one, intend to fight to make the idea of universal post-secondary education come to fruition.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO TOBY GROSSMAN

• Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I take this opportunity to share with the Senate the memory of an extraordinary woman. Toby Grossman, of Albuquerque, NM, lost her battle with cancer on May 25, 2004. Her husband, Leonard, and daughter, Jennifer, survive her.

Ms. Grossman was the senior staff attorney at the American Indian Law Center, Inc, the oldest existing Indian-controlled and operated legal and public policy organization in the country, having joined the center in 1971. She also served as the administrator of the Southwest Intertribal Court of Appeals, a voluntary court of appeals available to tribes in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and west Texas.

Ms. Grossman was a graduate of the University of Florida and the University of New Mexico School of Law, and

a member of the New Mexico Bar. A lecturer at the UNM School of Law, she regularly taught courses on the Indian Child Welfare Act and tribal government and she co-taught a course on Tribal-State relations. Ms. Grossman was a superb teacher. In class, she was serious, probing and enthusiastic. She set high standards for herself and expected the same from her students. Yet she was also friendly and caring in her relations with students, many of whom she remained close with long after they graduated.

She specialized in child welfare issues including child abuse and neglect, drafting of tribal codes, as well as assisting several tribes in negotiating Tribal-State agreements on the Indian Child Welfare Act and trained social workers and judges on child welfare law. She also led the American Indian Law Center team that developed the first Model Children's Code for tribes, as well as Model Codes for Child Welfare, Adoption, and Prevention of Elder Abuse. In these and other areas, local, State and tribal governments, as well as attorneys, frequently sought her advice and services.

Ms. Grossman's private life was no less exemplary than her public work. She was a good friend and was devoted to her synagogue. Despite the long hours she devoted to her professional and civic activities, she always found time to be a loving wife, mother, and friend.

Toby Grossman was a remarkable person, who significantly influenced the law, her many students, the New Mexico legal community, and all of Indian country. Her work has improved the lives of numerous Indian children, most of whom she never had a chance to meet. She leaves behind an indelible mark on this world.●

CELEBRATING ST. CROIX ISLAND, MAINE

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, today I mark the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the settlement of St. Croix Island, in Calais, ME, one of the earliest European settlements in North America. It is an extraordinary site with a remarkable story to tell—a narrative overflowing with adventure, courage, risk, and a very special friendship between the Native tribes who peopled this region long ago and the pioneers who crossed an ocean in pursuit of opportunity, prosperity, and freedom.

There is an old Sioux proverb: "A People without History is like Wind in the Buffalo Grass." When expedition leader Pierre Dugua and his company of 120 settlers arrived on the shores of what is now the great State of Maine, the First Peoples, the "People of the Early Dawn," or Wabanaki, had already occupied these lands for thousands of years. Nevertheless, they came out of their villages with open hearts and open hands to welcome Dugua and the 120 noblemen, artisans, and soldiers

who had sailed with Dugua across the Atlantic from their native France.

At that moment, the European settlers began to craft a new history for this place they called "Acadie." But it is important to remember that the Native Peoples, the Wabanaki, had already authored their own, proud history of North America, although it has taken us, in some cases, all too many years to understand that. That the Native tribes welcomed Dugua and his followers speaks to one of the noblest aspects of human nature—an instinct to reach out to men and women in need, to our human neighbors, whenever we can help, whether they live across the street, or across the world. Certainly, that generous impulse lives on today among the members of the Passamaquoddy Nation.

The historical bond between the Native Peoples is also one to celebrate and remember. The lives and personalities of the people in this region continue to be shaped, generation after generation, by the history, legends, and purpose forever invested in this coastal stone and soil by Pierre Dugua and his companions, one of whom was the great Samuel Champlain, the "Father of Canada." Let us not forget that 23 of the original French settlers remain interred on this island today, making this a sacred, as well as a historical, site.

After four centuries, the settlement of St. Croix remains a powerful lesson, a parable that is not only about a journey of a thousand miles, beginning with a single step, but also about the extraordinary ability of diverse cultures to support and enrich one another, and, in the end, to create new cultures, new peoples who bring unique and singular strengths to the never-ending, universal campaign to build a peaceful and prosperous world.●

TRIBUTE TO REVEREND BOBBY WELCH

● Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Reverend Bobby Welch, a native of Fort Payne, AL. Recently, Reverend Welch was elected President of the 16.3 million member Southern Baptist Convention. A 1965 graduate of Jacksonville State University, Reverend Welch entered the Army and was sent to fight in Vietnam, where he demonstrated his bravery and commitment to our great Nation. Reverend Welch was shot by Vietnamese forces and left for dead on the battlefield. This United States paratrooper, Ranger, and Green Beret received a Bronze Star and Purple Heart in recognition of his courage and service.

The achievements of Reverend Welch demonstrate the leadership qualities of Americans. Reverend Welch has upheld the principles of our Founding Fathers through his military service to his country. His courage in harm's way mirrors that of the brave soldiers who now risk their lives daily for the maintenance of democracy.

After his military service, he chose to answer his highest call, the Christian ministry. He has poured himself into that calling with conviction and zeal, and the harvest has been tremendous. He now pastors the 4,000 member First Baptist Church of Daytona Beach, FL. And, now, his Southern Baptist Convention has chosen him as their president.

His leadership of this vibrant and growing denomination will continue its success in touching the lives of millions who are struggling to find meaning in their lives. This denomination every day provides aid, comfort, purpose, and hope to people that are hurting and in need. They help those who are sick and dying, those with marital problems, those in jail, those with alcohol and drug problems. They sanctify marriage, celebrate births, and provide solace at times of death and loss. They further these goals through a worldwide ministry. They provide specific advice and financial help and a vision of an new and better life in Christ. That's what they do—and they do it every day. And they do it without government aid or direction. They do it also with fidelity, as they understand it, to the Word contained in the Holy Scriptures. Faithfulness to righteous living, even in times of corruption and excess, has always been a cornerstone of the Baptist way and it has benefitted our Nation in far more ways than we can list. So, it is appropriate that we pause a moment to recognize Reverend Welch and his life and the many contributions of the Baptist denomination he leads.●

TRIBUTE TO DAVID HENRY, SR. AND DAVID HENRY, JR.

● Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I wish to recount a special discovery made recently in south Georgia by a Birmingham constituent of mine. The discovery was of a letter dated April 8, 1943, that was sent from a 24-year-old Alabama soldier serving in North Africa to his newborn son back home. A world war was raging and the letter's author, David Henry, Sr., of Roanoke, AL, was concerned that he might never get to see his newborn son. It is a special letter, indeed, sent from another continent and reflecting the essential values and life's lessons that Mr. Henry wanted to impart to his 3-month-old son, David Henry, Jr. Among other things, the letter tells young David about the value of choosing work you enjoy, developing a love of reading, finding a hobby, and guarding against greed and selfishness.

Fortunately, Mr. Henry, Sr., survived the war and returned home to his wife and young son. The letter and the penned wisdom, however, has lain dormant for more than 60 years. Mr. Henry, Jr., discovered the letter recently while cleaning out his parents' house in south Georgia. Mr. Henry's dad died this past February. Mr. Henry sent me a copy of his father's letter,